

GEORGICON:

AN

IMITATION

OF PART OF

VIRGIL'S FIRST GEORGICK,

TO THE BEST OF KINGS.

QUANDO ULLUM INVENIENT PAREM!

OXFORD:

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GEORGE W. BROWN

W. B. BROWN

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P R E F A C E.

IN perilous times like these, when every subject should pay that respect to his Majesty which is justly his due, I thought it my duty to bring a voluntary offering; and lay it, as the courtly phrase has it, at the foot of the throne.

Having determined to write something in praise of my Prince, I took up the prince of poets, in order to find out a motto expressive of my duty, or descriptive of his Majesty's merit and greatness. Some how or other, the First Georgick caught my attention: as much, I believe, from its familiarity of name as from any thing else; for I could not find any thing, except at the beginning and end, that was, or indeed could be made, applicable to

our most gracious King. This determined me to call this loyal effort of mine, GEORGICON. Though when I came to look into the argumentum in Georgica, where I found that the word is derived from the Greek γεωργός, and this again from γῆα terra, and ἔργον, opus, which signifies husbandry, or tilling the ground, I then discovered a greater similitude than I at first apprehended. And as I had read, that in primitive ages of the world, shepherds and husbandmen were sometimes kings (though at present they are made of finer clay) and that *tilling* the earth, and *ruling* it, had at least some analogy, both of these offices having the same thing for their subject, as the schools say; I began to conceive that the title I had assumed was not altogether impertinent; and to flatter myself, that even the critics would permit it to pass without very severe censure. Emboldened by these considerations, I adopted it; and am consequently led, by a kind of pity, to remind his Majesty, that there are some parts of the earth that Providence suffers him still to govern, though the greatest part of his dominions (like the Assy-
rians

rians kingdom of old) *is departed from him.* For, to my great surprize, and I fear humiliating mortification to his Majesty, instead of hearing of MY Colonies, and MY Subjects; I do not find in the King's last MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH to both houses of parliament, though at the end of a session, one single word of either: so that we may truly say, they are lost out of the King's speech. I hope this remarkable silence is not meant by the minister as a tacit resignation of the American Colonies, and all claim thereto on the part of England: but I must confess, the complexion of things wears a little of this colour; for the Poet Laureat does not tune one note of his courtly pipe to this imperial theme; but writes in as flat and senseless a key as ever poor hackneyed poet could have fallen into, that had never drank sack or inspiration from the auspicious smiles of royal protection. And what must now become of his augury of submission of America to the feet of England, or, what is the same, to the feet of the minister? I am afraid the whole system is changed; and the prophecies of minister and laureat can only be understood,

understood, as we interpret dreams, by their direct contraries; and I doubt if the Commissioners will much mend the matter: it is well if they are not called (as one of our witty heads said the other day) by the rebellious sons of America, literally, ERRANT-FOOLS.

Perhaps some may wonder that this loyal address should come from *this* seat of the muses, and imagine that there is a great alteration from former times in the political creed of our Alma Mater; but I can assure the world she remains unalterably the same. In the whirl of politics peoples ideas and conceptions are very much disturbed, confused, and perverted, till, like persons turning round, they become giddy, and then falsely imagine that surrounding objects move. So it has been erroneously thought, that while the court was turning round to Alma Mater, that Alma Mater actually turned round to the court. Not that I take upon me to vindicate the loyalty of the University in every respect, and in all cases, any more than I do his Majesty's ministers; and I verily believe

believe that never worse or weaker men did take upon them to manage the affairs of a state; and that never was a state so woefully governed; dismembered, and bemired before. It is therefore out of the sincerest principles of loyalty to his Majesty, that I declare those of his household his very worst foes; and we know from the authority of scripture, that this is one of the signs of the very worst times. This is the reason why I do not offer one grain of incense to the CHANCELLOR of the UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD and the EXCHEQUER OF ENGLAND, when I am sacrificing upon the altar of loyalty to my King. And I am fully persuaded, with my Lord Abingdon, a peer that does so much honour to his indebted country, that if ever the spirit of English liberty should rouse indignant from the Scottish oppression, under which it now seems wholly cast down, and demand redress, that it will not be appeased, till these very men, who now stile themselves the King's friends, and, to our mortification and ruin, are actually his ministers, are made the victims.—But I desist; and shall only make a slight apology (for I think it scarcely

scarcely deserving any) for closing this adventurous essay with a Latin line; for besides the authority of Juvenal and Tully (both of whom have introduced Greek into their Latin) I must own, that I was so captivated with this sonorous line, and found it so expressive of what I wished to describe, and withal thought it so noble a close, and what is more, that from its martial sound it would not be altogether disagreeable to the ears of my Prince, whose puissant spirit must delight therein, that I could not forego the temptation of finishing with it. And I hope it will be but of small disappointment to any person not skilled in the language; for I can assure them, that the very sound of the line will give the true sense of it: for is it not as the sound of a trumpet?

Oxford, July 1, 1778.

G E O R G I C O N.

^(a) **H**OW best to till, or sow the fertile field;
 The vine conduct, or teach the grape to yield
 Its precious nectar; how to tend the kine;
 And make the bees ambrosial treasure mine;
 These themes inglorious, let those poets chuse,
 All us'd to wanton with the Mantuan Muse:

L I N E S I M I T A T E D.

^(a) *Quid faciat lætas segetes; quo fidere terram
 Vertere, Mæcenæ, ulmisque adjungere vites,
 Conveniat: quæ cura boum, qui cultus habendo
 Sit pecori: atque apibus quanta experientia parcis:*

[Po]

I sweep, with bolder hand, the sounding lyre ;
And feel, or seem to feel, poetic fire.

And lest this flame Phœbean soon should die,

Lend me thine aid, and grant me thy supply,

Omnific Bacchus! for each bard shall own,

What things he writes inspir'd by thee alone.

And, at my scanty board, with lib'ral hand,

And yellow chaplets crown'd, let Cæres stand.

^(b) To taste your gifts unknown, and sip your spoil

That lights up nature's lamp with precious oil,

What swarms of beings quit the churlish North!

Like Goths and Vandals, see they deluge forth:

: LINES LIMITED :

Hinc canere incipiam. Vos, ô clarissima mundi

Lumina, labentem cœlo quæ ducitis annum

Liber, & alma Cæres;—

^(b) ————— vestro si munere tellus

Cbaoniam pingui glandem mutavit arista,

Poculaque inventis Achelœia miscuit uvis.

By

By smell of English fare and famine led,
 With mask'd Rebellion flaming at their head
 In courtly robes of loyalty—and find,
 What best can serve them, Monarchs good and *blind* *.
 From Caledonian hills they take their flight,
 Vultures well known, and on St. James's light :
 There, on the carcase of the state they prey,
 Drink deep its blood—the vitals tear away.†

* Erratum. We should read, *kind*.

+ The reader will please to take notice, that the author differs very widely with respect to the emigrants from Scotland, from the celebrated Junius; who in his *extraordinary* letter to the King says, “ While the natives of Scotland are not in actual rebellion, “ they are undoubtedly intitled to protection ; nor do I mean to “ condemn the policy of giving some encouragement to the novelty “ of their affections for the house of Hanover.”—But it is no wonder that so disloyal an author should speak thus much in favour of the King's *war* *foes*.

Britannia's genius sighs thro' all her groves;
 The frightened fawns and Dryads quit their loves,
 Round Neptune's car no more the Naiads play,
 To proud Spithead they cut their wat'ry way:
 Before th' imperial barge, well pleas'd they sport;
 And Cæsar smiles as he is wont at court.

(c) Descend, bright goddess of the heavenly targe!
 Protect the King—with olive shade his barge:
 But oh! for mercy—turn the Gorgon head,
 Such frowns shall strike each petit-maitre dead.
 The snakes too, let them seem to twine and kiss;
 'Twere impious here for any thing to hiss:
 Let nought but shouts salute the royal ear;
 And Gallia tremble when such shouts she hear.

LINES IMITATED

(c) ———: *oleæque Minerva*
Inventrix, uncique puer monstrator aratri.
Et teneram ab radice ferens, Sylvane, cupressum.

(d) Ye gods! presiding o'er this mortal state,
 Ye over-ruling ministers of fate!
 And goddeses! (for each to tend upon her,
 The QUEEN commands you, as her maids of honor)
 Ye! who let fall the fruitful show'rs to earth,
 To nurse the embryo seeds, and give them birth,
 Descend!—But oh! your precious gifts restrain,
 Stop every sluice, nor shed one drop of rain.
 And what tho' Nature sicken and decay,
 And ripening fruits, and harvests die away;
 'Twere wond'rous pitiful, for these, you know,
 To stop, or spoil, the royal RARE-SHEW.

LINES IMITATED.

(e) *Diique, deaque omnes studium quibus arva tueri;
 Quique satis largum caelo dimittitis imbrem.
 &c.*

(c) All things were made for Kings and for their ease,
 The people's only duty is, to *please*.
 Markham perhaps can state exact the odds;
 And tell how nearly Kings resemble Gods.
 Great Brunswick's apotheosis declare;
 And point his seat in heaven before he's there.
 There shall this prophet, with a patriarch's eye,
 The future pierce, and reach the distant sky:
 See, his paternal honours all laid down,
 A mother's hand stretch'd forth this son to crown.

But rival Sandwich, with the couch of fame,
 Upon a first-rate poop, great Brunswick's name,

LINES IMITATED.

(c) _____: & te maximus orbis
Auctorem frugum, tempestatumque potentem
Accipiat, cingens maternâ tempora myrto.

With

With more than boatwain's voice, Stentorian sound,
Gives to the listening crowd, and world around;
Till from air, earth, and sea, great Brunswick's name
rebound.

Then, much himself, but more his King to please,
He sung, with Bacchanalian roar, his glee.

(⁶) See, this sceptre I resign,
This trident, Brunswick! now is thine,
Monarch of the boundless sea!
Neptune thou, and sailors we.

CHORUS.

Monarch of the boundless sea!
Neptune thou, and sailors we.

LINES, IMITATED.

(⁷) — *Deus immensi ventis maris, ac tua nauta
Numina sola colant: tibi serviat ultima Tbulæ,
Teque sibi generum Tethys emat omnibus undis.*

Then

Then changing at once, both his face and his measure ;
Which this Proteus, they say, can effect at his pleasure :

“ These ships all your own, Sir! with streamers so fine,
“ And bottoms so clean, that you off them may dine :
“ Well-mann’d, and well-found, and so tight all their cords,
“ (Notwithstanding what Richmond has *prov’d* to the lords)
“ Shall sail out of harbour a monstrous fleet,
“ And humble America down to your feet.
“ Each nation that sees it shall tremble with fear ;
“ And France too be humbled if she interfere.
“ And if you don’t conquer by sea and by land,
“ Like great Cæsar of old, may I *never* be damn’d.
“ Your pardon, my Liege, for this nautical word :
“ I’m a failor, you know, and I learnt it on board.”

In token of forgiveness, Brunswick nods :

So Kings should pardon—for so pardon Gods.

But humbler I, and full of subject-fear,

’Fore Kings who scarce can speak, much less can swear ;
My votive tablet trembling I suspend,
And thus invoke the monarch as a friend.

Oh!

Oh! thou who best canst rule this fav'rite isle,
 Imperial Brunswick! with Phœbean smile
 Exalt a bard, tho' not of Scottish race;
 Who not one MAC thro' all his line can trace;
 Whose ancestors with NORMAN-WILLIAM came;
And, ENGLISH now, would boast no other name†.

When Fate shall send its summons from the skies,
 And thou, like other Kings, shalt surely rise;
 And plac'd in heav'n, rememb'ring still thy birth,
 Shalt cast thy rays refulgent down to earth;

† As the author wishes to avoid the most distant imputation of want of respect and loyalty, he begs that this line might not be supposed to hint at his Majesty's declaration from the throne in his *first* speech to his people, viz. *That he glory'd in the name of BRITON*; of which Junius invidiously says, "When you affectedly renounced the name of Englishman, believe me, Sir, you were persuaded to pay a very ill-judged compliment to one part of your subjects, at the expence of another." As if Kings may not say what they please in their speeches; and call themselves by what names they think proper.

C

O! send

O! send some sacred influence from afar,
 And shine to us another Julian-star.
 Or, midst the ^(g) monsters, which the keener eye
 Of heav'n-read sages sees thro' all the sky,
 Insert thy flaming head, and claim thy seat:
 The ardent Scorpion now contracts his feet;
 To thy just claims the radiant space resigns:
 And, see! another Scorpion brighter shines.
^(h) Whate'er thou art—whatever thou shalt be,
 Tartarian regions may'st thou never see.

L I N E S I M I T A T E D.

^(g) *Quà locus Erigonen inter Chelasque sequentes
 Panditur: ipse tibi jam brachia contrahit ardens
 Scorpheus, & cœli justâ plus parte reliquit.*
^(h) *Quicquid eris; (nam te nec sperent Tartara regem,
 Nec tibi regnandi veniat tam dira cupido:*

Within

Within thy breast no lust of pow'r shall dwell,
 Tho' it in Sandwich might, to rule in hell*.
 Not in that hell I mean that Christians fear;
 God grant his lordship never may come there.
 (i) But where Greece fabled her Elysian plains,
 Where gloomy Dis, with Proserpina reigns.

LINES IMITATED.

(i) — *Elysios miretur Græcia campos,
 Nec repetita sequi curet Proserpina matrem.*

* The author cannot be supposed to allude to that remarkable line of our immortal Milton, so difficult to read on account of its double antithesis, utter'd by the *infernal* tyrant:

Better to *reign* in HELL, than *serve* in HEAVEN.

Indeed if such a suspicion had arisen in the mind of any reader for a moment, he hopes the following lines would soon have saved the censure: because Milton certainly wrote on the christian system, and must mean the christian hell; the author's hell is merely heathenish.

(k) But ere we lose, and heaven shall gain thy name,
 And Fate record it in the rolls of fame;
 Great Brunswick! stay—with wisdom all thine own,
 Support the empire, and secure thy crown.
 Prepare for hostile deeds, and dread dismay:
 And cast the pride of empty pomp away.
 The iron-path of horrid war pursue:
 March thou and fight—and let Germaine review.

LINES IMITATED.

(k) *Jam pridem nobis cæli te regia, Cæsar,
 Invidet, atque hominum queritur curare triumphos.
 Quippe ubi fas versum atque nefas; tot bella per orbem,
 Tam multæ scelerum facies: non ullus aratro
 Dignus honos: squalent abductis arva colonis,
 Et curvæ rigidum falces conflantur in ensen.
 Hinc movet Euphrates, illinc Germania bellum:
 Vicinæ ruptis inter se legibus urbes
 Arma ferunt: sævit toto Mars impius orbe.*

Give

Give thy command—and at the potent word,
 Each hind shall beat his plough-share to a sword;
 Assume the martial strut, and haughty stride,
 And gird his weapon on with conscious pride;
 The dread Militia*—see they draw the line,
 And o'er Cox Heath the new made halberts shine.
 There, virgin tents erect their snow-white tops:
 And Kent for war, resigns her care of hops.
 Her sons, with ardor, wait the landing foe,
 And swear they'll give the fatal overthrow.
 So prompt, so forward are they to engage,
 The leaders scarce restrain the warriors rage.

* It is somewhat remarkable that the words,
 ———— squalent abductis arva colonis,
 should, in the ordo verborum, be paraphrased thus:

Horrent agri cultoribus abreptis ad MILITIAM.
 I hope this proof of the antiquity of the militia will reconcile
 some of our country gentlemen to their duty.

Such,

⁽¹⁾ Such, should the spirits of his steeds dilate,
 When Brunswick, Cæsar-like, is drawn in state;
 Forgetful of the important weight they draw,
 Tho' to the House he went to give us law;
 Impatient of the curb and rein, they'd tear
 The golden-team—and snorting, high in air,
 Toss their unbridled heads, and plough the ground
 With wanton hoofs—while, at the hoof's rebound,
 The state coach dash'd would lie in fragments all around.

Oh! born to govern by the *mildest* sway,
 Great Brunswick! listen, and accept the lay.
 Thou, who the waves of faction canst controul;
 Connect extreams, and harmonize the whole:
 Make Scotchmen loyal—Jacobites convert,
 Foes of thine *House*, to make thy friends at court:

LINES IMITATED.

⁽¹⁾ *Ut cum carceribus sese effudere quadrigæ,
 Addunt se in spatia : & frustra retinacula tendens
 Fertur equis auriga, neque audit currus habenas.*

In spite of Fate, beyond th' Atlantic waves,
 To give them freedom, who were meant for slaves:
 Oh! list, and hear the muse enraptur'd draw,
 Scenes which she view'd, or which she thought she saw.

Like Hector, ere at Ilion's wall he fell—
 When he had kiss'd, and bid his Queen farewell—
 In clouds of dust she saw great Brunswick roll,
 In flaming chariot, emblem of his soul.
 To fam'd Cox Heath, the maiden-warrior flies,
 His courier Fame, whose trumpet rent the skies.

On Philip's son, amidst the Grannic flood,
 Fortune, in shape of plumed eagle, stood:
 So, on his beaver, Terror's self did scowl,
 And Pallas hover'd in the shape of owl.
 While, to the wonder of the gaping world,
 The royal standard Victory unfurl'd;
 Then, on the regal tent, well-pleas'd did fix it;
Et Tuba, terribili sonitu, TARRA-TANTARRA dixit.

F I N I S.

In spirit of peace, beyond the Atlantic waves,
 To give them freedom, who were meant for slaves;
 O! let, and bear the name of Christian love,
 Scenes which the world, or which the angels love,
 Like Master, ere at this world he fell—
 When he had said, and bid his Queen farewell—
 In clouds as still as the great Father's will,
 In burning chariot, emblem of his fall,
 To land of Cox-Henry, the noble warrior king,
 His countenance, whole transport of the soul,
 On Philip's dog, amidst the Canaan's fold,
 Fortune, in face of plumed knight, stood;
 So, on his breast, Henry's kiss did glow,
 And Pollas bowed in the shade of oak,
 While, to the wonder of the gaping world,
 The royal standard victory unfurled;
 Then, on the regal seat, well-placed did sit he;
 As Tada, terrible justice, TARA TARA did sit.